

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method for configuring a conference among communications devices, the method comprising:

querying a platform with conference information for establishing a conference between plural communication devices;

providing the conference information to a rules-based engine; and

applying rules and communication device data with the rules-based engine to determine one or more communication device configurations for a conference corresponding to the ~~video-call~~ conference information.

Claim 2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the communication device data comprises schedule information for communication devices associated with the one or more conference configurations.

Claim 3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the communications device comprises an audio communications device.

Claim 4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the communications device comprises an application sharing communications device.

Claim 5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein communications device comprises a streaming communications device.

Claim 6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein one or more of the devices comprises a video communications device.

Claim 7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the communications device data comprises bandwidth associated with one or more communications devices.

Claim 8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: determining plural communication device configurations for a conference corresponding to the conference information;

selecting one of the communication device configurations based on one or more predetermined optimization factors; and

scheduling the communication devices associated with the optimal communications device configuration for accomplishing the conference call.

Claim 9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the optimization factors comprise the cost associated with the communications device configurations.

Claim 10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the optimization factors comprise the reliability associated with the communications device configurations.

Claim 11. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising updating the communications device data to reflect changes in the status of the communications devices.

Claim 12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a rule comprises that conference information having a request for a video conference will have an audio conference configured with audio communications devices if video communications devices are unavailable to support the requested video conference.

Claim 13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a rule comprises that conference information having a request for application sharing communications devices will require a conference with audio or video communications devices.

Claim 14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a rule comprises that a conference not exceed predetermined resource consumption without an approval code.

Claim 15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a rule comprises that predetermined users are permitted access to a predetermined communications device.

Claim 16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a rule comprises that a communications device configuration have access codes for each communications device of a conference that dials into the conference in order to authenticate all inbound callers.

Claim 17. (Original) A system for configuring a conference between plural communications devices, the system comprising:

a query engine that accepts conference information associated with a scheduling request for communications devices;

a communication device database that stores data associated with communications devices;

a rules database that stores rules associated with the configuration of conferences with the communication devices; and

a configuration engine interfaced with the query engine, the device database and the rules database, the configuration engine applying the conference information, the communication device data and the rules to determine one or more communication device configurations for the conference.

Claim 18. (Original) The system of claim 17 further comprising an update engine interfaced with the communication device database, the update engine maintaining device data to reflect changes in the status of communication devices.

Claim 19. (Original) The system of claim 17 further comprising an optimization engine operable to select one of the communication device configurations based on predetermined optimization factors.

Claim 20. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the configuration engine is operable to select one of the communication device configurations and schedule the associated communication devices for accomplishing the conference.

Claim 21. (Original) The system of claim 20 further comprising an optimization engine associated with the configuration engine, the optimization engine operable to optimize the

communication device schedules according to predetermined optimization factors.

Claim 22. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the configuration engine is further operable to provide a user with the plural configurations and accept a configuration selection by the user for scheduling a conference.

Claim 23. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the communication devices comprise audio devices.

Claim 24. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the communication devices comprise application sharing devices.

Claim 25. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the communication devices comprise video devices.

Claim 26. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the communication devices comprise streaming devices.

Claim 27. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the scheduling request comprises a request for a conference by video devices and the configuration engine is further operable to schedule audio devices if video devices are unavailable.

Claim 28. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the rules comprise access control rules that restrict one or more predetermined communication devices by one or more

access control factors.

Claim 29. (Original) A system for managing communications devices, the system comprising:

a configuration rules module having configuration rules for interfacing the communication devices;

an access control rules module having access control rules for restricting access to predetermined communication devices according to predetermined conditions;

a scheduling rules module having scheduling rules for scheduling communication devices for conferences; and

a rules-based engine operable to accept requests for a conference with communication devices and to apply the configuration, scheduling and access rules to configure and schedule the conference.

Claim 30. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein the communications devices comprise video, audio and application sharing devices.

Claim 31. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein a configuration rule comprises that a MCU is required for video conferences between three or more video communication devices.

Claim 32. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein a scheduling rule comprises that a first set of predetermined communications devices have priority over a second set of communications devices.

Claim 33. (Original) The system of claim 32 wherein the first set of communications devices comprise devices internal to a business and the second set of communications devices comprise devices associated with a service provider external to the business.

Claim 34. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein an access control rule comprises that a conference configure as a dial-out conference in which a bridge communications device calls endpoint communications devices.

Claim 35. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein an access control rule comprises that a conference configured as a dial-in conference require an access code for in-bound callers.

Claim 36. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein an access control rule comprises that only a predetermined set of individuals may use a predetermined communications device function.

Claim 37. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein the predetermined communications device function comprises communication in excess of a predetermined bandwidth allocation.

Claim 38. (Original) The system of claim 36 wherein the set of individuals comprise individual associated with a geographic location and the communications device function comprises access to a communications device at the geographic location.

Claim 39. (New) An apparatus for configuring a conference among communications devices, comprising:

means for querying a platform with conference information for establishing a conference between plural communication devices;

means for providing the conference information to a rules-based engine; and

means for applying rules and communication device data with the rules-based engine to determine one or more communication device configurations for a conference corresponding to the conference information.